

Tuyết Sơn Thiên Tự Mt Adams Zen Buddhist Temple

雪山禪寺

February 2013 Newsletter



Dear Dharma friends

Happy February and the start of the Lunar year of the snake! We have less than a foot of snow on the ground here along with freezing nights and sunny days. It feels like spring yet we know that more snow will probably come before our spring really starts. In most years, Spring really starts here by late May. Living with expectations of things to come may get in the way of living right now. Many of us are so busy worrying about the past or anxious about the future that we do not get much time to experience living in the present. When I retire I'll ... or when I get a new job ... I'll be happy. Or, I feel terrible about what happened last week, ... so many reasons to put off the NOW of being.

Just for today may we all experience the moment of now. When we do get caught up in future or past stuff, we can reorient to NOW by just consciously breathing in and breathing out. Take a minute and try it.

May we be well, may we be happy, may we know love, may we know peace.

With Metta, Kozen

Happy Chinese New Year - the year of the snake



According to the Chinese Zodiac, the Year of 2013 is the Year of the Snake (in the water sign), which begins on February 10, 2013 and ends on January 30, 2014. The Snake is the sixth sign of the Chinese Zodiac, which consists of 12 Animal Signs. The Snake is the most enigmatic, intuitive, introspective, refined, intelligent, and collected of the Animals Signs. Ancient Chinese wisdom says a Snake in the house is a good omen because it means that your family will not starve. People born in the Year of the Snake are keen and cunning, intelligent and wise. They are great mediators and good at doing business. Tradition tells us that you should have good luck if you were born in the Year of the Snake. This year is the water snake - an auspicious year. It is also the Buddhist Year 2256.

Earth Day Retreat from Friday 19 April - Monday 22 April

Save the date and join us for a special time of meditation, earth awareness, and living well as part of the earth's collective whole. Ven. Kozen and Ven. Kobai will lead this special weekend of Earth-Based spiritual practice. Other presenters include Ven. Miles, a Buddhist teacher and astronomer from Open Gate Zen Center and Lew Ellingham, a poet, birder and member of the Buddhist Beat generation on the West Coast. There will also be presentations by Christian clergy who are activists in the environmental movement. Our practice will include seated, walking and movement meditation as well as a special dedication to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva (which can be translated as "Earth Treasury," "Earth Storehouse," or "Earth Matrix Buddha"). More details will be available on Facebook and our website, as well as www.plummountain.org.

Yoga and Music This Sunday, Feb. 3, at 1:00 p.m. \$15 per person at Trout Lake Abbey

This coming Sunday, guest yoga instructor and musician Cindy Novelo will be offering a special yoga class at Trout Lake Abbey. Come join us for a soothing, yet energizing yoga class, which will incorporate soulful musical offerings by this award-winning songwriter and musician.

Cindy, her music, and her presence envelope the earth like a warm wind - powerful, welcomed, refreshing, nurturing, and heartening. ~Singer/Songwriter David Roth
May the breath of music light your soul...

Cindy Novelo

Musician, Songwriter, Yoga Instructor, www.cindynovelo.com

In addition to her life-long dedication to music, singer/songwriter Cindy Novelo is a long-time student of yoga and yoga philosophy and creator of a university course entitled "The Ancient Art of Yoga: Postures, Philosophy and History" which she taught for 4 years at Baker University. Cindy has rich and broad experience teaching courses and facilitating workshops on creativity, yoga and yoga philosophy, body awareness, healing, inter-cultural communication and performance preparation. In remission from ovarian cancer, Cindy's healing journey has enhanced her creative expression and deepened her personal spiritual perspective. A native of Lawrence, KS, Cindy lived overseas for 17 years and has performed across the U.S., in Europe and Latin America. She finds working with others to deepen their own spiritual and creative journeys one of her most rewarding endeavors.

One-Day Meditation Intensives Saturday 16 Feb. and Saturday 23 March

Join us for a 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. meditation intensive on either or both of these two dates. We will practice several forms of meditation, develop *metta*, loving-kindness practices for ourselves and others. A vegetarian lunch will be served. Please contact Abby for reservations at 509.637.4511 or e-mail her abgale@embarqmail.com. We're asking for a \$30.00 donation, but we would rather have you here than your money, so don't let finances stop you from coming.

Nirvana Day

Saturday 9 February

Join us for meditation and celebration of Buddha's Parinirvana or the ending of his time in Samsara (the endless round of birth and death). This is a time to think about our own future death and on the deaths of loved ones and reflects. It is a time to experience the Buddha's teachings on impermanence. We will celebrate this during our regular Saturday morning service, which begins at 9:00 a.m.

We are a small Thien (Zen)
Buddhist Temple
practicing "laughing farmer
zen" - living our practice,
sitting zazen, being here -
right now!

I visit Coyote Ridge Correction Center, a Washington State prison, on a regular basis. One inmate wrote me and asked me Three great questions, so I thought I'd share my responses with you.

Q: I like Buddhist pastors better than the Christian ministers who come here. Are Buddhists just better or kinder or what?

As for pastors - Christian, Islam, Buddhists, etc. - all people are different. Some of us have absolute belief - "I is my way or the highway." We seem to think that we have the exclusive road to God or the divine and that anyone who does not agree with us is wrong and damned. Other pastors have perfect faith - "God didn't make any junk and that which is God is vast and I only know a small part - whatever goodness in the world happens is due to the divine. So please do not confuse people's beliefs with their faiths - there are open loving folk in all faiths and rigid demanding folks in all faiths.

Services & Meditation

Morning Services 6:30 a.m.
Monday through Friday

Evening Services
6:30 p.m.

Thursday. and Fridays

Weekend Services
9:00 a.m.
Saturdays

Q: Are Buddhists vegetarian? Should I become a vegetarian?

The vegetarian issue - well, here is the low-down. Buddha ate meat or whatever was offered to him. Most people in Buddhist countries eat meat. Theravada Buddhist monks eat meat - as long as they did not ask for the animal to be killed - it is OK for them to eat meat that is offered to them.

Having said that, it takes more resources and power to raise animals than it does to raise vegetables and fruit. It costs our environment more to produce animal protein than plant protein. Meat is more likely to cause health problems than vegetable matter. Our current bulk processing in slaughterhouses and feed lots is cruel and can be very nasty to animals. I have witnessed a slaughterhouse, to me it was terrible, animal cries of pain and fear, using a tractor to push an animal who could not walk into a chute, electric prods, sometimes animals are not dead when they are cut open; it can be disgusting and very cruel. I have also seen small-farm raised animals, which are killed, and often butchered on the farm, which seems much kinder to an animal. Sadly, that only happens on small farms.

So what is the right action? For me, I prefer to not eat meat to avoid the suffering - it is part of being a Mahayana Buddhist monk and also a personal choice. I work to avoid killing anything - even insects. You can choose to eat or not eat meat based upon your own personal understanding of not taking life and right action. What do you think? What is right for you?

Q: The Christian minister who came here said that animals do not have a soul. Do animals have a soul?

All sentient beings - sentience is the ability to feel, perceive, or be conscious, or to have subjective experiences or with any form of brain activity - is part of the living whole - everything is Buddha. Everything is connected and Buddha. The Buddha tells us that there is no "personal soul" that the Christians believe in - there is only the whole-ness of all things. So, your minister was correct - animals have no soul and neither do people - we are part of the wholeness that was never born and will never die.

Calendar

FEBRUARY

2 Saturday Service 9am
3 Yoga and Music class 1pm
9 Parinirvana - "Nirvana Day".
Mahayana Buddhist festival
marking the anniversary of
Buddha's death. 9 am
9 Saturday Service 9am
10 Chinese year of the Snake
16 Saturday Service 9am
16 Meditation Intensive
7:30 am - 3:30pm
23 Saturday Service 9am
Magha Puja Fourfold Assembly
(or Sangha Day). Marks the day
Buddha addressed a meeting of
1250 Arahants
23 NWDA Annual Meeting

MARCH

2 Saturday Service 9am
9 Saturday Service 9am
16 Saturday Service 9am
23 Saturday Service 9am
23 All Day meditation
7:30 am - 3:30 pm
25 Kozen to CRCC
30 Saturday Service 9am

HAKUIN ZENJI - SONG OF ZAZEN

(Dharma poem by Hakuin Ekaku 1685-1768)

All beings by nature are Buddha, as ice by nature is water;
apart from water there is no ice, apart from beings no Buddha.

How sad that people ignore the near and search for truth afar,
like someone in the midst of water crying out in thirst,
like a child of a wealthy home wandering among the poor.

Lost on dark paths of ignorance we wander through the six worlds,
from dark path to dark path we wander, when shall we be freed from birth and death?
For this the zazen of the Mahayana deserves the highest praise:

Words of Wisdom

Lao Tzu

(Tao Te Ching)

"Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage."

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

"Simplicity, patience, compassion.

These three are your greatest treasures.

Simple in actions and thoughts, you return to the source of being.

Patient with both friends and enemies, you accord with the way things are.

Compassionate toward yourself, you reconcile all beings in the world."

"Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom.

Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power.

If you realize that you have enough, you are truly rich."

"A good traveler has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving."

"Those who know do not speak. Those who speak do not know."

"When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be."

"Life is a series of natural and spontaneous changes. Don't resist them; that only creates sorrow. Let reality be reality. Let things flow naturally forward in whatever way they like."

Is your group part of the Northwest Dharma Association? If not, it is time to join! If you are a solitary practitioner or without a sangha you can still donate dana (money). They are a clearing house for Buddhist Activity in the Northwest and need our support.



Northwest
Dharma
Association

read more about the NWDA at <http://www.northwestdharma.org/>

A guide for our practice

Be soft in your practice. Think of the method as a fine silvery stream, not a raging waterfall. Follow the stream, have faith in its course. It will go its own way, meandering here, trickling there. It will find the grooves, the cracks,

offerings, precepts, paramitas, Nembutsu, atonement, training- the many other virtues - all rise within zazen.

Even those with proud attainments wipe away immeasurable crimes- where are all the dark paths then? The Pure Land itself is not far.

Those who hear this truth even once and listen with a grateful heart, treasuring it, revering it, gain blessings without end.

Much more, if you dedicate yourself and confirm your own self-nature- that self-nature is no nature - you are far beyond mere argument.

The oneness of cause and effect is clear, not two, not three, the path is put right; with form that is no form going and coming--never astray, with thought that is no thought singing and dancing are the voice of the Law.

Boundless and free is the sky of samadhi, bright the full moon of wisdom, truly is anything missing now? Nirvana is here, before your eyes, this very place is the Lotus Land, this very body the Buddha.

Community Resources

Free Trade coffee that goes for a good cause:

The Presbyterian Coffee Project provides free trade, sustainable, worker friendly coffee. In the greater Trout Lake area you can purchase it from The Farm Store at Trout Lake Abbey. Proceeds are shared between the Trout Lake Presbyterian church and the Mt. Adams Zen Buddhist Temple.

Churches practicing an embracing, kind, and loving faith

Trout Lake Presbyterian - Sunday service in winter at 11:15 am
<http://www.troutlake.org/main/custom.asp?recid=15&id=38>
Sunday Service at in summer 10AM

Bethel Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)
<http://church.gorge.net/bethel/>
Sunday Service at 10AM in White Salmon

Mid-Columbia Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.
<http://mcuuf.org/index.php>
Sunday Service at 10AM at the Rockford Grange, Hood River

Northwest Dharma Resources

Cloud Mountain Retreat Center
<http://www.cloudmountain.org/>

Co Lam Pagoda (Ethnic Vietnamese)
3503 S. Graham St.,
Seattle WA 98118
Some monks speak English
(Ask for Master Kim)

Minh Quang Temple (Ethnic Vietnamese)
14719 SE Powell Blvd.
Portland, OR

Plum Mountain Buddhist Community
618 W. 3rd St.
Aberdeen, WA 98520
Phone: 360.591.2203
<http://www.plummountain.org>

Portland Buddhist Priory <http://www.portlandbuddhistpriory.org/>

Zen Community of Oregon <https://www.zendust.org/>
(Great Vow Monastery)

Northwest Dharma Association <http://www.northwestdharma.org/>

Pacific Hermitage <http://hermitage.abhayagiri.org/>
65 Barned Road, White Salmon, Washington 98672

Dharma Rain <http://www.dharma-rain.org>

Hood River Zen www.hoodriverzen.org
(affiliated with Dharma Rain)

the crevices. Just follow it.
Never let it out of your
sight. It will take you.
Ven. Sheng-yen (b. 1931)

Red Pine, the northwest translator of Chinese Buddhist classics, makes the comment that our literature is filled with enlightenment stories about what people were doing when they woke up. And he notes that he cannot find a single instance of someone who woke up while reading a book. Many of us are what Ven, Kobai calls, "bookstore Buddhists," reading book after book about mindfulness and meditation. This does not mean we should avoid studying. It means our awakening requires action. Meditate!

TUYẾT SƠN THIỀN TỰ + MT ADAMS ZEN BUDDHIST TEMPLE + 雪山禪寺

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